

14 INTERNATIONAL CONGRESS OF ENTOMOLOGY
CANBERRA 22-30 AUGUST 1972

L. Brown, Jr.
COLLECTION

Abstracts, p. 94. Publ. 1972.

THE GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF ANTS, PAST AND PRESENT

W.L. Brown, Jr.

Department of Entomology, Cornell University, Ithaca, N.Y., U.S.A.

Taking into account new and impending synonymy, the world genera of Formicidae are listed by broad zoogeographical areas. The tropical ant faunas are divided arbitrarily into Neotropical, Ethiopian and Indo-Australian. Genera occurring in all 3 regions mostly also occur outside the tropics, or did during the Tertiary. When these widespread ones are excluded from consideration, there are extensive sharings of genera between Ethiopian and Indo-Australian, and between Neotropical and Indo-Australian, but none between Ethiopian and Neotropical regions. The Tertiary and Recent ant distributions so far as known seem to follow the Darlingtonian pattern of dispersal and extinction centered on the Afro-Asian tropics. Comparison of fossil faunas with Recent distributions shows that subfamily Myrmicinae has been radiating and expanding since middle Tertiary times, chiefly at the expense of Dolichoderinae. In particular during this time, the dominant genera *Pheidole* and *Crematogaster* have been actively replacing *Iridomyrmex* and relatives in a centrifugal pattern.